

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track
No. 1) Bill 2024 [Provisions]

Public Hearing – 14 June 2024
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
National Disability Insurance Agency

Topic: Mechanisms for release of NDIS funds

Question reference number: NDIA IQ24-000024

Question asked by: Jordon Steele-John

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard page: 36

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2024

Question:

Senator STEELE-JOHN: With the exception of the payment of mobility allowance to participants, which is transferred into their bank accounts for the purposes of meeting travel expenditure, the only way to have funds approved from somebody's plan is when the expenditure claim is approved by a scheme delegate.

Mr Swainson: I don't think that's correct. I think it's probably most helpful to this committee if we take that on notice and provide you with an outline of various ways in which funds could be released.

Senator STEELE-JOHN: Are you saying to this committee today that there are ways in which funds may be released without the approval of an NDIA scheme delegate?

Mr Swainson: I'm saying there's a range of mechanisms. I think, to provide the most accurate and fulsome evidence to this committee, it is something that we should take on notice.

Answer:

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports. This includes options for how their NDIS funding is managed. How funds are paid depends on how participants manage their budgets.

Participants who have a plan manager – or choose to self-manage their NDIS plan – can use both registered and non-registered NDIS providers. However, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) will only make payments to registered providers and self-managed participants.

Providers send invoices directly to the participant's plan manager. Invoices must include a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) unless the provider is exempt from quoting an ABN. The plan manager will process the payment through the myplace provider portal and pay the provider.

Self-managed participants who are self-managing their plan are invoiced by, and pay, providers directly. Participants need a receipt from the provider to acquit the expenditure

against their plan using the myplace participant portal. Before participants make a claim, they need to confirm that:

- they received the supports being claimed
- they and the provider agreed on a price and the type of support
- their plan includes funding for the support
- their plan has enough funding for the amount being claimed
- they received the supports within the dates of their plan
- they have the ABN of the provider delivering the supports, unless the provider has evidence, they are exempt from quoting an ABN.

NDIA-managed participants require providers to submit a payment request through the myplace provider portal to receive payment for services or supports for participants who are NDIA-managed. Providers need to submit a payment request within 90 days from the end of the service booking and will need the following information to claim:

- participant name
- participant reference number or NDIS number
- dates of support
- support item reference number
- support item price.

Self-managed participants also need evidence that they received the support, who provided the support and on what dates. Participants need this for all supports and evidence can be either:

- a receipt or tax invoice from your provider
- a bank statement or payroll record for any worker you employ.

Participants must keep any type of evidence that confirms the details in their claim. The Agency may contact participants to discuss the evidence they have to support their claim including:

- support dates (start and end)
- hours/quantity
- unit price
- total amount

When participants and providers claim for supports delivered, all parties need to ensure:

- the supports relate to the participants disability
- NDIS funds are spent on supports which are described in the participant's plan
- the support is most appropriately funded through the NDIS. For example, participants and providers shouldn't claim from a plan if the support is more appropriately funded through other government services, like health or education systems.

Plan Managers must keep records showing:

- the participant's name and NDIS number
- the provider's name, their ABN, or evidence the provider is exempt from quoting an ABN
- the support date
- a short description of the support provided
- the support category the support relates to
- the amount of support provided (hours/quantity)
- the support price (per hour/unit)
- the total amount paid

The NDIA regularly completes audits to make sure registered plan managers makes the necessary checks. When the Agency does undertakes an audit, we will ask the plan manager for the information they used to make the claim.

Some claims are rejected because they do not meet NDIA financial control and system requirements. Payment requests rejected through the MyPlace Provider Portal, Participant Portal or the My NDIS mobile app are referred to the NDIA as a payment enquiry often require substantial investigation and validation.

If payment requests cannot be successfully processed via the MyPlace Portal, NDIS App or the MyPlace Participant Portal, registered providers need to submit a payment enquiry via the 'payment enquiry' tile in the myplace provider portal which can be tracked by a unique identification number. Self-managed participants can also complete a MyPlan Purchase Payment request form if not able to claim via the portal or app.

While payment reviews take time, maintaining the integrity of the NDIS is essential and as part of our compliance monitoring, the NDIA may contact participants and providers to provide information about supports and/or services that have been paid for. Unsupported claims may need to be repaid to the NDIA or referred to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, which could result in revocation of your registered provider status.

The NDIA remains committed to improving the provider and self-managed participant claiming experience which includes the development of the NDIS app and improved 'on system' claiming enhancements.

Registered providers and self-managed participants are encouraged to use the self-help information and resources that are available on the NDIS website at www.ndis.gov.au/providers/working-provider/myplace-provider-portal-and-resources

The NDIA has also developed various resources to assist provider and participant claiming practise. A how to claim from my plan guide has been published on the NDIS website at <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/your-plan-menu/your-plan/what-supports-can-you-buy-your-ndis-funding/how-much-will-we-pay-each-support>

More information is available on the NDIS website at www.ndis.gov.au/providers/working-provider/getting-paid